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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7786
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7900
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3618
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6725
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1860
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1441
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8397
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8518
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SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: HARYANA: DODGING DROUGHT, RIDING WAVES

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1747
[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 1261

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda of the Congress Party announced on August 21 that he has recommended dissolution of the state legislature and early elections to the state assembly. The state Governor must accept his recommendation. Originally scheduled for February 2010, the Haryana elections will now most likely occur in October 2009, coinciding with state assembly elections in Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh. The Election Commission of India is expected to announce the precise dates soon. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) The ruling Congress Party currently holds an overwhelming 62 out of 90 total seats in the assembly in Haryana, a small but prosperous state bordering Delhi. The principal opposition party is the regional Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) with seven seats. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was virtually wiped-out in the last Haryana assembly elections, winning only one seat. Contacts report that the Congress has a media blitz underway in Haryana, reminding rural and agricultural voters of their pro-farmer policies over the last five years. The opposition parties have yet to get their campaigning act together.

Riding the Momentum

[1](#)3. (SBU) Comment: The call for early elections in Haryana was not unexpected. Most analysts have been predicting it since the Congress Party swept the April-May 2009 Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) elections, garnering nine out of the state's ten seats (and leading in two-third of assembly segments). In contrast, the BJP is in the throes of a publicly played-out meltdown (Ref A). The INLD has slunk into the background after failing to win a single seat in the 2009 general elections. All this makes it an opportune moment for the Congress leadership to attempt what has seldom happened in Haryana in the last 20 years -- back to back state assembly election wins for one party.

Dodging Drought

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment continued: There might be more to the Congress strategy than merely going on the offensive while their rivals are on the mat. With many pockets in India

suffering from a truant and erratic monsoon and increasing talk of drought, the Haryana government might be trying to cash in its feel-good chips before it falls victim to the economic downturn. End Comment.

ROEMER